DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 286 807 SO 018 467

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TITLE U.S.-Soviet Relations: Testing Gorbachev's "New Thinking." Current Policy No. 985.
INSTITUTION Department of State, Washington, DC. Bureau of Public Affairs.
PUB DATE Jul 87
NOTE 7p.; Address presented at the University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA, July 1, 1987).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Diplomatic History; *Disarmament; Foreign Countries; *Foreign Policy; International Education; *International Relations; National Security; Peace; Political Science; Primary Sources; Social Studies; United States Government (Course); United States History
IDENTIFIERS Gorbachev (Mikhail); Nuclear Weapons; *United States; *USSR

ABSTRACT

Forty years ago, George F. Kennan advanced the doctrine of containment against Soviet encroachment throughout the world. The Soviet Union has evolved from a Eurasian land power into a global superpower. In an effort to create an international environment congenial to domestic reforms, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has sought greater tranquility along Soviet borders. He seeks to exploit latent anti-nuclear sentiment in Europe and to challenge the conceptual underpinnings of Western deterrence. While an Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) agreement would represent a major victory for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), there are some who fear Gorbachev's moves represent a more subtle and effective means of removing the U.S. nuclear presence from Europe. This would leave a denuclearized Europe alone to face numerically superior Soviet conventional forces. These concerns can be dealt with by recognizing that NATO will need to retain a significant nuclear element in its strategy of flexible response. That element will be composed of nuclear warheads on INF aircraft and U.S. submarine-launched ballistic missiles. Gorbachev is also attempting to improve relations in the Far East and to exploit the turmoil in the Persian Gulf area. However, any significant change in the conduct of Soviet foreign policy will only gradually emerge. The future U.S.-Soviet relationship is likely to continue to contain elements of conflict and cooperation. A firm, consistent, and patient policy can help the U.S. attain its foreign policy goals. (SM)

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Current Policy No. 985

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United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

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United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Following is an address by Michael H. Armacost, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, July 1, 1987.

It is a special pleasure to be at the University of Virginia during this year of the 200th anniversary of the Constitution. That document owes much to Virginia's enlightened political leaders—a number of whom, including three of our earliest Presidents, were associated with this institution. The University of Virginia and the Miller Center, under its fine director and scholar of the presidency, Ken Thompson, continue the tradition of the Virginia Founding Fathers in seeking to blend scholarship with a commitment to public service.

I welcome this opportunity to address the subject of "The Dialogue of the Superpowers." Over the past year, our discussions with the Soviets have intensified further. During Secretary Shultz's visit to Moscow last April, major progress was made in arms control, especially in the area of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF). We hope an agreement will soon be possible—the first to actually reduce nuclear weapons. Yet our relations are not confined to just arms control, however important that subject may be. The U.S.-Soviet competition extends across a broad spectrum that includes:

- Soviet behavior in regional conflicts;
- Human rights; and
- Bilateral matters such as cultural, scientific, and people-to-people exchanges.

The U.S.-Soviet dialogue must deal with all of these issues.

I would like to direct my remarks today to regional aspects of the U.S.-Soviet dialogue, with particular emphasis on developments in Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf. These issues are of fundamental importance to the quality and stability of our relationship with Moscow, and they are the issues on which I have been most personally engaged.

Strategic Setting

Forty years ago this month, George F. Kennan published in the journal *Foreign Affairs* a remarkable article destined to change the way thoughtful Americans conceived of relations with the Soviet Union. Entitled "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," Kennan's article analyzed in graceful and elegant prose the motivations behind Stalin's foreign policy. He ended by prescribing that the United States should enter "with reasonable confidence upon a firm containment designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counterforce at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world." Thus currency was given to the word "containment," and, in one version or another, in Democratic administrations as well as Republican, that term has come to define the basic U.S. strategy toward the Soviet Union.

The appearance of Kennan's article coincided with the Truman Administration's first steps to stem Soviet attempts to establish control over the Eurasian land mass. Viewed as a whole, U.S. efforts were directed toward containing a three-pronged Soviet strategic thrust centered in the west on Europe, in the east on China and Japan, and in the south on Iran and the Persian Gulf.

In Europe, containment found its initial expression in the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and NATO.

In the Far East, the U.S.-Japanese Security Treaty and U.S. resistance to North Korean aggression created a barrier to the further spread of Soviet influence.

In the Near East, the United States faced the Russians down when they refused to remove their troops from Iran.

Much has changed since Kennan's article was published. The Soviets have evolved from a Eurasian land power into a global superpower. They have developed ties with a host of Third World countries and established, in the late 1970s, outposts of special influence in such countries as Angola, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Nicaragua, and Afghanistan. The task of containing, neutralizing, or reversing the spread of Soviet power in the Third World has posed a major new challenge that this Administration has sought to address with realism and strength.

Despite the Soviets' new global reach, however, the three strategic theaters that emerged in Kennan's time have remained critical in the U.S.-Soviet competition.

- In Europe, U.S. and NATO policies have succeeded in checking Soviet military expansionism. The Kremlin has not abandoned, however, efforts to extend Soviet influence over the greatest concentration of industrial and military power on the Eurasian Continent. The dramatic buildup in both Soviet nuclear weaponry and conventional arms continues to present a major threat to Western security. East European aspirations for self-determination also remain unsatisfied. And Moscow continues to hope it can drive wedges between the American and European components of the Atlantic community.
- Direct Soviet expansionism in the Far East has been checked by U.S. security cooperation with Japan; the economic dynamism of Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and the ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations] countries; and by the normalization of U.S. relations with the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.). Nonetheless, extensive Soviet military deployments in Asia and support for Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia reveal the continuing Soviet ambition to translate military power into durable political influence in the area.
- The collapse of the Shah in Iran in 1979 made the Persian Gulf and the Middle East the most volatile region of the world, opening opportunities to the Soviets not seen since 1946. The power vacuum in Iran greatly facilitated the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, the first direct large-scale involvement of Soviet forces outside Eastern Europe since World War II. This Soviet action prompted President Carter to proclaim that "any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force."

Gorbachev's "New Thinking"

George Kennan believed that a strong, consistent, and realistic policy by the United States could promote tendencies that would eventually lead to a moderation of Soviet power. "No mystical, messianic movement—and particularly not that of the Kremlin—can face frustration indefinitely without eventually adjusting itself in one way or another to the logic of that state of affairs," he wrote in the "X" article.

The "frustrations" confronting Soviet ambitions mounted in the last years of the Brezhnev regime. Economic growth rates declined. Consumer dissatisfaction increased. Spiritual malaise manifested itself in rampant crime, corruption, and alcoholism. The slow pace of Soviet technological innovation threatened to erode even Moscow's long-term prospects in the global strategic balance.

Brezhnev's international policy, with its excessive reliance on military power, was increasingly perceived to be fundamentally flawed.

- Instead of intimidating the West, Soviet missile deployments brought U.S. and NATO counterdeployments and a revival of Western defense spending.
- Instead of eliciting concessions, Moscow's military buildup in the Far East increased tensions with China, Japan, and the ASEAN states and spurred defense cooperation between the United States and a variety of Pacific allies and friends.
- Instead of accomplishing a quick and easy victory in Afghanistan, Soviet intervention precipitated a long, costly, bitter, and inconclusive struggle with no end in sight.

Mikhail Gorbachev came to power determined to reverse the Soviet Union's declining position in the East-West "correlation of forces." In internal policy, he has:

- Cracked down on crime and corruption;
- Urged greater "democratization" of party and state institutions; and
- Initiated economic reforms designed to revitalize and modernize the Soviet economy.

In an effort to enlist the energies of the Soviet intelligentsia, Gorbachev has allowed the prominent dissident Andrei Sakharov to return from forced exile and has promoted greater "openness" in public debate.

To create an international environment congenial to domestic reforms, Gorbachev has sought greater tranquility along Soviet borders. He has injected new dynamism into Soviet foreign policy—installing new people in the policymaking apparatus, launching new initiatives, and opening or renewing ties to a number of important noncommunist countries ignored by Brezhnev. Gorbachev and other Soviet spokesmen have called for fundamentally "new thinking" in the formulation of national security policy. Soviet spokesmen have begun to sound new ideological themes such as the "interdependence" of all countries, mutual security, the limitations of military power in attaining security, and the neccessity in international negotiations to take account of the legitimate interests of all parties.

Beyond generating intellectual ferment, Gorbachev has taken tentative steps to implement some new policy approaches in the regions along the Soviet periphery.

Gorbachev's Initiatives in Europe

In Europe, he has sought to exploit latent antinuclear sentiment and to challenge the conceptual underpinnings of Western deterrence. He has reversed Brezhnev's INF policy by virtually accepting the "zero-zero" solution proposed by President Reagan in 1981. Gorbachev's predecessors had engaged, starting in 1978, in a massive buildup of SS-20 missiles designed to intimidate Europeans and Asians into a more accommodating posture. In response to the Soviet deployments, NATO in 1979 resolved to undertake counterdeployments of U.S. GLCM [ground-launched cruise missiles] and Pershing II missiles unless a negotiated solution made them unnecessary. For the next 4 years, the Soviets waged a massive propaganda campaign to prevent NATO deployments. In December 1983, they even walked out of the INF negotiations.

In October 1986 at Reykjavik, Gorbachev agreed to eliminate all but 100 warheads on longer range INF (LRINF) missiles. In mid-April, he offered the entire elimination of shorter range INF missiles. Although important issues remain unresolved—above all, the issue of verification—an agreement is within reach and should be achievable by the end of the year. The United States would prefer an agreement that would eliminate all LRINF warheads.

While an INF agreement along these lines would represent a major victory for the NATO alliance, a number of thoughtful Europeans and Americans are uneasy, fearful that Gorbachev's moves represent merely a more subtle and effective means of pursuing the long-term Soviet objective of removing the U.S. nuclear presence from Europe. They worry that Gorbachev will entice the West into a series of "zero solutions," leaving a "denuclearized"

Europe alone to face numerically superior Soviet conventional forces—and this at a time when demographic and budgetary trends in a number of NATO countries will make it more difficult for them to maintain current levels of conventional forces. Doubts about the reliability of the U.S. security commitment have led to more intensive intra-European consultations on these issues.

We should not lightly dismiss the seriousness of European concerns or the ambiguity of Gorbachev's motives. His endorsement of European nuclear free zones and his call for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000 are clearly designed to generate popular pacifist sentiments against Western governments. Gorbachev has shown no inclination to remove a key source of East-West tension: the basic division of Europe imposed by the Red Army. This was the thrust of President Reagan's recent address at the Berlin Wall.

Nonetheless, I believe the concerns that have been expressed about an INF agreement are exaggerated. They can be dealt with by a frank alliance recognition that NATO will need, for the foreseeable future, to retain a significant nuclear element in its strategy of flexible response. Even with an INF agreement, NATO will have more than 4,000 nuclear warheads, including those on INF aircraft and U.S. submarine-launched ballistic missiles, with which to implement this strategy. These and other systems can ensure the reliability of extended deterrence.

As for the imbalance in conventional forces, this problem must be addressed through a combination of NATO force improvements and negotiated reductions in Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces. With major negotiations on this issue looming, now is not the time for unilateral NATO reductions. Indeed, to correct the existing imbalance, unilateral or asymmetrical Soviet reductions will be necessary.

Gorbachev's Initiatives in Asia

Gorbachev's moves in the Far East have been even more tentative and more ambiguous than his moves in Europe, but the motive is clear.

Responding to a widespread recognition that Soviet standing in a region of growing economic and political significance was at an all-time low, Gorbachev announced, in Vladivostok last July, a number of initiatives aimed at improving relations with the nations of the Pacific—particularly China.

In the intervening months, Moscow has made some progress in improving relations with Beijing. Economic and technical cooperation has developed at an accelerated pace. Gorbachev's public offer to delineate the Sino-Soviet border along the "main channel" of the Amur River has led to the reopening of border discussions after a 9-year hiatus. Other aspects of the Vladivostok initiative—a phony withdrawal of six Soviet regiments from Afghanistan and the actual withdrawal of one Soviet division from Mongolia—have fared less well with the Chinese. Nonetheless, the latter are doubtless closely following the intensified diplomatic dialogue on Afghanistan and will take account of any significant reduction in Soviet forces in the Far East.

The Soviets have also undertaken to improve relations with other key players in Asia. Gorbachev proposed at Vladivostok long-term cooperation with Japan and called for intensified economic cooperation with ASEAN. The U.S.S.R. signed the protocols of the Raratonga Treaty establishing a South Pacific nuclear free zone and, in January, concluded a 1-year fishing agreement with Vanuatu, providing limited port access for a few Soviet vessels.

While this flurry of activity indicates a clear desire to play a more assertive role in the region, Gorbachev has yet to accommodate the key security concerns of his Asian interlocutors.

- For the Japanese, Soviet refusal to return four northern Kurile islands presents real obstacles for any warming of relations.
- For ASEAN and the P.R.C., Soviet support for the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia remains a major obstacle to improved relations. While the Soviets have intensified their diplomatic dialogue on the Cambodian issue, they have been either unwilling or unable as yet to push Hanoi off longstanding intransigent positions.
- Finally, Moscow's exploitation of antinuclear sentiment in the South Pacific—at no cost to its own freedom of action—represents nothing more than pouring old wine into new bottles.

It is still too early to tell what Gorbachev's "new thinking" really means. At a minimum, it constitutes a set of tactical maneuvers designed to court world public opinion, throw rivals off balance, and gain the diplomatic high ground in Third World issues. His objectives may go beyond this. We—and others—can best discover his true intentions by putting his words to the test—by insisting that the concerns on our security agenda be addressed.

Soviet behavior in regional hotspots will be one kind of test. Gorbachev has acknowledged that Third World conflicts can, in his words, "assume dangerous proportions, involving more and more countries as their interests are directly affected; this makes settlement of regional conflicts . . . a dictate of our time."

We could not agree more. And we can think of no better place to begin to resolve regional conflicts than in the Persian Gulf, where a volatile and unstable situation could, in fact, assume "dangerous proportions."

The Soviet Challenge in the Gulf

The Persian Gulf is, for the United States and its allies, one of the most important regions of the world, supplying more than 25% of all the oil moving in world trade in any given day. Overall, the nations of the Persian Gulf possess 63% of the free world's oil reserves. In 1986, about 30% of Western Europe's oil consumption came from the Persian Gulf; 60% of Japan's oil came from there. While the United States obtained only 6% of the oil we consumed last year from the gulf, this figure will increase as our own reserves decline and consumption increases.

There is, moreover, a single world oil market and a single world price for oil. During the Middle East oil crises of 1973 and 1978–79, we all discovered what can happen when the supply of oil from the gulf is disrupted. Shortages produced rationing and endless gas lines. The world price of oil quadrupled in the first crisis and doubled in the second, causing inflation, unemployment, and recession.

The United States has a strategic interest in ensuring that a region of this vital importance does not fall under the domination of a power hostile to the West. Reductions in the British presence in the gulf during the past two decades threatened to create a security vacuum. We tried to fill it by strengthening two major regional powers, Saudi Arabia and Iran. We also took steps to increase support for two key countries near the gulf, Turkey and Pakistan. Though Soviet-supported regimes in Iraq and Syria sought to undermine this arrangement, it worked as long as the "two pillars" remained stable internally.

The collapse of the Shah's government in 1979 and the transformation of Iran into a messianic, radical state fundamentally altered the security equation in the area.

Iran itself became a major source of regional instability. Virulently anti-American, expansionist, supportive of terrorism, Iran has worked against the moderate Arab states in the region both with direct pressure and with internal destabilization. Though Iraq began the current war with Iran, it quickly discovered it could not prevail. Iran carried the war back to Iraqi territory, and the battle lines have stalemated in recent years. Iraq has evinced a willingness to settle the conflict through negotiation. Iran has rejected all efforts to effect a cease-fire and negotiated end to the fighting. During the past year, Iran has posed an increasing threat to nonbelligerent shipping in the gulf.

This situation has offered Moscow new policy opportunities. The Shah's downfall ended a period of more than 30 years during which the Soviets faced an extensive U.S. presence in Iran. Initially, the Soviets tried to capitalize on this strategic windfall by trying to establish a working relationship with the Khomeini regime and by seeking to propel the Tudeh Party, which they saw as a powerful potential instrument of influence on the Iranian revolution, in a leftward, more pro-Soviet direction. Neither effort succeeded. By 1983, the Tudeh Party had been driven underground, its top leadership arrested, and a pattern of mutual recrimination and hostility set for Iranian-Soviet relations. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Soviet materiel support for Iraq in the gulf war reinforced Iranian antipathy for Moscow.

Despit › current Iranian hostility, the Soviets have not abandoned their long-term ambitions with Iran. They have sought to keep their options open in Tehran and, where possible, to improve the relationship, including approval of some deliveries from East European sources. These East European arms go to the Revolutionary Guards, as well as to the traditional army. The Soviets are hedging their bets, waiting for the new opportunities that might be presented after Ayatollah Khomeini dies. The Revolutionary Guards are expected to play a key role in that transition period.

In the meantime, the Soviets have tried to capitalize on new insecurities in the region aroused by Iranian militancy and the Iran-Iraq war. They have established a naval presence in the gulf for the first time. They have improved relations with Iraq, lifted an arms embargo, and become Baghdad's largest supplier of military equipment and a key source of economic aid.

The Soviets have also sought to establish relationships with the moderate Arab states. In 1985, they established diplomatic relations with Oman and the United Arab Emirates. Two Saudi ministers have visited Moscow in less than 2 years to discuss such sensitive issues as oil pricing. Soviet agreement to explore ways to protect Kuwaiti-owned oil tankers is only the latest example of this new tack.

Finally, the turmoil in Iran made it easier for the Soviets to reach the decision to invade neighboring Afghanistan, which itself was experiencing an upheaval wrought by the communist takeover in 1978. Not only did the Soviets' occupation of Afghanistan put them hundreds of miles closer to the oil fields of the Persian Gulf, it gave Moscow new opportunities to exert military and political pressure against both Iran and Pakistan.

These developments posed complex choices for U.S. policy as we sought to restore stability to the region.

On the one hand, by virtue of its size, resource base, and geographical location, Iran has many shared interests with the United States, including opposition to Soviet expansion in Afghanistan. We have no desire for a confrontation with Iran and believe that a convergence of important interests will eventually lead to an improvement in our relations with this strategically important country.

On the other hand, our bilateral relations cannot substantially improve while Iran pursues policies toward the Iran-Iraq war, terrorism, and its neighbors in the gulf that are inimical to American interests. Because the unimpeded flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz is critical to the economic health of the Western world, we have very important interests in freedom of navigation for nonbelligerent shipping in and through the gulf. The security, stability, and cooperation of the moderate Arab states of the area are important to our political and economic goals, and we, therefore, have a stake in helping these countries deal with threats from Khomeini's Iran.

We must be particularly wary of Soviet efforts to exploit the turmoil in the gulf by establishing a military presence there. This was an important consideration in our recent decision to reflag and protect 11 Kuwaiti oil tankers. Late last year, to counter Iranian targeting of Kuwaiti-associated shipping, Kuwait approached both the Soviet Union and the United States to explore ways to protect Kuwaiti-owned oil shipping. The Russians responded promptly and positively. They were prepared to take on much larger responsibilities for protecting the Kuwaiti oil trade than they were ultimately offered. The Soviets have little economic interest in the free flow of oil—a reduction in supplies on the world oil market would increase the price of Soviet reserves—so we must assume that Soviet interest in the Kuwaiti offer was largely geopolitical. Our willingness to reflag 11 Kuwaiti tankers as U.S.-flag vessels was motivated very largely by our desire to limit any Soviet military role in the gulf.

To give the Soviet Union an important role in protecting gulf oil destined for Western Europe, Japan, and the United States would be a major strategic mistake. Gulf states would come under great pressure to make naval facilities available to the Soviets, and enhanced Soviet influence and presence could open to the Soviets possibilities for holding vital Western economic interests hostage.

While opposing an increased Soviet military presence in the gulf, however, we think there is a constructive role the Soviets can play in relation to the gulf war. They can join with others to promote an end to the Iran-Iraq conflict, which has done much to create the current unstable military and political environment in the region. The Soviets share, I believe, our interest in seeing the war end with neither victors nor vanquished. Ties to Iraq and a number of other moderate Arab states—as well as the presence of a substantial Muslim population in the U.S.S.R.—give Moscow an interest in preventing an Iranian victory and the consequent spread of Islamic fundamentalism.

In meetings among the "Big Five" permanent members of the Security Council, the United States and others have vigorously pressed for a Security Council resolution that anticipates enforceable measures against either belligerent which proves unwilling to abide by a UN call for a cease-fire and withdrawal of its forces to internationally recognized borders. The United States has worked closely with the Soviets in fashioning the cease-fire resolution. We welcome their cooperation.

The real test of their desire to end this war, however, will come in supporting mandatory enforcement measures. Unless these measures have real teeth, the UN will merely have passed another hortatory resolution devoid of real

consequences for those who defy its will. A concrete test of the Soviet seriousness and commitment to peace in the gulf is, therefore, their willingness to put some teeth into the current Security Council effort and to urge their East European allies and North Korea to halt sales of arms to Iran.

A second crucial step the Soviets can take to defuse tensions in the area would be to withdraw their troops promptly from Afghanistan. The Soviets in recent months have, more and more emphatically, declared their desire to withdraw. Yet the phony withdrawals implemented to date have been of no military consequence, and the Geneva proximity talks remain deadlocked, despite some narrowing of positions, over the question of a withdrawal timetable.

The Soviets have also raised the question of forming a government of national reconciliation prior to troop withdrawals. They have belatedly acknowledged that a serious process of national reconciliation must include the resistance, the refugees driven from the country, and prominent individuals associated with previous Afghan governments. But Moscow's current approach appears to envisage a coalition government built around and led by the Communist Party of Afghanistan—a nonstarter.

In our conversations with the Soviets, we have reminded them of the burden their presence in Afghanistan imposes on regional stability as well as on the broader U.S.-Soviet relationship. A political solution would have a positive impact on our ability to move forward on other aspects of the East-West agenda. What is required are not increased attacks against innocent Pakistanis and Afghans. What is required is for the Soviets to take the tough decisions that will facilitate an early resolution of the conflict. We are ready to respond positively when they do.

Conclusion

Let me conclude with a few general reflections.

Whatever the ultimate import of Gorbachev's "new thinking," any moderation in Soviet foreign policy conduct will emerge only gradually. The U.S.-Soviet strategic competition will not disappear. The relationship is likely to continue to contain elements of conflict and cooperation. We must expect that endemic instability in regions like the Persian Gulf will provide fertile ground for competition. And, unless we are both careful, competition can lead to conflict.

As we confront such future challenges, we will want to recall a few lessons drawn from the past 40 years of U.S.-Soviet relations.

First, our policy is most successful when there is a clear definition of the national interest based on rational calculation rather than emotional impulse. Authors of the containment policy fashioned a policy based on a farsighted conception of the nation's requirements. They succeeded in providing a basis for European and Japanese stability and prosperity beyond what any of them were able to foresee at the time. Similarly, our military presence and diplomatic efforts in the Persian Gulf since the 1940s reflect a durable recognition of American interest in that vital source of energy supplies.

Second, avoidance of miscalculation requires a clear communication of U.S. interests. U.S. failure in 1949–50 to include Korea in the U.S. defense perimeter in the Far East reportedly contributed to a decision to launch a North Korean attack on the South. Similarly, the Soviet leadership's calculation of the risks of intervening in Afghanistan may have been influenced by the seeming U.S. indifference to events in Afghanistan following the April 1978 pro-Soviet coup.

We have a mechanism for communicating to the Soviets our interests and concerns on regional issues. In November 1985, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev agreed that these issues should form a regular part of the bilateral dialogue. Since that time, besides discussion of these issues at the ministerial and summit levels, there has been a regular series of bilateral meetings at the Assistant Secretary level dealing with the Middle East, Afghanistan, southern Africa, the Far East, and Central America. To initiate the current round of these talks, I met with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and First Deputy Foreign Minister Vorontsov in Moscow in March. [Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs] Dick Murphy will hold talks on the Middle East and the gulf in just a few days.

Third, our experience in the 1970s suggests that comprehensive accords or "codes of conduct" to regulate superpower behavior are not workable. They failed to impose effective discipline on the competitive elements of our relationship and did much to create additional misunderstandings. Limited forms of agreement or cooperation on specific issues, on the other hand, may be possible. Rival powers not enjoying political intimacy or responding to common purposes have, throughout history, engaged in limited forms of cooperation dictated by mutual interest. The 1972 Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin, for example, defused tensions in that city. Efforts to arrange U.S.-Soviet cooperation at the United Nations on the Iran-Iraq war is to be seen in this framework.

Finally, we must remember that an effective diplomacy depends on maintaining key regional military balances. In the case of the Persian Gulf, U.S. policy since 1979 has focused on Soviet proximity to the region and the need to support and strengthen pro-Western powers in the region. Here, our security assistance plays a crucial role. In recognition of the key role Saudi Arabia plays in gulf security, the Administration has offered to sell Saudi Arabia a number of items, including helicopters and electronic countermeasure systems, Maverick missiles, and F–15 aircraft. These arms are defensive. They will in no way affect the military balance with Israel, but they will bolster Saudi defenses against outside intervention. U.S. willingness to help the Saudis meet their legitimate defense needs will send a very strong signal of the level of U.S. commitment and resolve to protect our interests in the region.

With these lessons in mind, I am convinced that we can look to the future of U.S.-Soviet relations with confidence. Our society is one of the most innovative and dynamic that history has known. A firm, consistent, and patient policy can attain our foreign policy goals. Perhaps in the fullness of time such an approach can even lead to the moderation of Soviet power forecast by George Kennan. ■

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Office of Public Communication • Editorial Division • Washington, D.C. • July 1987
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